

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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CONFESSIONS OF A CARETAKER.

A SERIAL STORY.

By "RITA."

*Author of "Dame Durdan," "Darby and Joan,"
"My Lord Conceit," etc.*

CHAPTER XIII.

THE next day a letter came for me from Miss Kate, asking me to go and see her and the children if Mrs. Cray could spare me.

The note said: "Come about five p.m. They always have tea with me in my boudoir, and you will see them to great advantage."

Mrs. Cray gave me leave; and so, about half-past four, I started off for the house in Manchester Square which they had taken for the season. Miss Kate had given orders that I should be shown up to her room, and there I found her with the children. One was sitting on her knee looking at a picture-book, the other standing by the window craning his pretty fair head to see over the flower-boxes into the street below.

She jumped up and welcomed me warmly. "Here, boys," she called out, "this is my old nurse who used to take care of me when I was a little girl. Come and shake hands with her."

I thought how pretty she looked standing there with those handsome little fellows. She had on a loose, soft tea-gown of some deep gold stuff, and a great bunch of crimson roses at her waist. The youngest boy was dark, and very like her; the eldest had a grave, fair face, and calm, steady, grey eyes.

They were not the least shy or abashed, but did just as she told them, and soon began to chat away with me in most friendly fashion.

Miss Kate gave me some tea, and made me tell her all that had happened since I left Dayrell Court.

She was very indignant when she heard the way Tom had behaved, and how he had gone off and left me quite destitute.

I suppose I had been there about half-an-hour, when suddenly Master Jack, the eldest boy, began to tap at the window and make signals, and seemed in a great state of excitement.

"Oh, mother!" he cried, "there's Rex down there in the street, and he's looking up. Do let me run down and ask him in?"

"My dear," said Miss Kate, "he was here only two days ago. He can't possibly want to see you again."

"Well, I want to see him," said the boy, and he dashed out of the room and down the stairs for all the world like a whirlwind. His mother rose and rang the bell.

"I had better have some fresh tea," she said, and then she came back to the table and stood looking down at it with a little soft, happy smile, as if at some pleasing memory.

I imagined that Master Jack had gone off after some young friend, and was bringing him back. I was therefore not a little surprised when, with much laughter and shouting, he dashed into the room with Rex Tresyllion.

"Captured again!" he said, laughing. "Mrs. Carruthers, I shall have to give your square a wide berth if this young brigand is always on the watch for me. It's next to impossible to pass the house without an onslaught; and, really, sooner than make a scene in this extremely proper neighbourhood, I have to give in to his demands."

They certainly said he was welcome,

and I suppose the assurance satisfied him, for he rattled on with a whole string of nonsense to the children in a merry, boyish fashion, as different as possible from the "company manners" I had seen at Mrs. Cray's evenings.

"Now, Jack, preserve the sanctity of my pockets!" he said at last. "The fairies have not been at work to-day. Here, Reggie, come and give me a kiss; what are you holding on to your mother's gown for? That is quite a baby trick."

He threw himself into one of the low easy-chairs scattered about, and the little fellow leaped on his knees and kissed him with right good will.

"What you brought me, Rex?" he liaped. "Candies?"

"Oh, the ingenuousness of childhood!" exclaimed Mr. Tresyllion. "How obstinately they refuse to let us credit them with a disinterested preference for our society! Well, Reggie, there may be a packet of wholesale indigestion in the left-hand pocket. Now mind, left; if you don't remember it to-day, I shall give the box to Jack."

It was pretty to see the elaborate care and attention the little fellow gave to the consideration of the subject before making that final plunge, which proved successful.

"How you spoil them!" said Miss Kate, rebukingly. "And you know I don't like them to eat sweets."

"Oh, chocolates won't hurt," he said, glancing up. "Halloa! Jane," he exclaimed in surprise, as he caught sight of me, "you here!"

"How on earth do you know Jane?" asked Miss Kate, wonderingly.

"Have you forgotten how and where we first met?" he said, laughingly. "Jane is quite an old acquaintance of mine. I saw so much of her at the Crays'."

"Oh, of course; I remember now. You are there a great deal."

She said it rather coldly and stiffly, and busied herself with the tea-cups, and poured out some fresh tea which the footman brought in just then.

I rose to take my leave; but she would not hear of my going, so I went over to the window, and Master Reggie followed me with his picture-book, and I sat there with him on my knee showing him the pictures, and receiving an occasional chocolate-drop as a reward.

I was wondering how Mr. Tresyllion had come to be so very intimate in the household. The two boys always addressed

him as "Rex," and, indeed, Miss Kate once or twice did the same. Master Jack seemed just to adore him, and I must say that I never met any one with so pleasant and taking a way with children as he had.

"Do you know, Mrs. Carruthers," he said once, "that I always hold you up as a model of the domestic virtues to all my married lady friends. I know no one else who allows her children in her boudoir to the sacred feminine institution of five o'clock tea. It is a very charming idea. I wish they would; but, perhaps," he added, reflectively, "the habit might have its drawbacks. They are apt to have quick ears and sharp memories, and the society that drops in for 'five o'clocks' is not always as innocent and harmless as——"

"Yours?" she suggested, as he paused.

"Thank you," he said. "My youth, and extreme modesty, which you may have observed——"

"Frequently," she said, with the greatest gravity of face and voice.

"I feared you might have overlooked it. I can't say how your assurance relieves me. But I was about to remark that if you attend many of these feminine conclaves, you have no doubt noticed the special friend or two—of the male persuasion—who drops in with the undeviating regularity of a machine."

She coloured softly and looked embarrassed. He suddenly put down his cup.

"I—I beg your pardon," he said, earnestly. "I sometimes forget, when speaking to you, how different you are from—from other women."

"Oh, no," she said in a constrained, hurried way. "Don't think that, pray. I—I am very much guided by my own wishes in such matters. If I did not like to have the children with me I shouldn't let them in. As it is——"

"As it is, you have some womanly instincts and feelings," he said, softly. "And yet you're not one of the silly, gushing type of mothers."

"I observe," she said, "that you are getting reflective. Let me warn you in time. It is a bad habit, and, once acquired, not easily shaken off."

"I know," he said, "that you treat everything lightly; but you, yourself, cannot be lightly treated or—thought of," he added, in a lower tone. "There may be now and then a person—even not reflective—who has found that out."

"I am sorry for that imaginary person," she said.

She leant back in her chair and took up her fan—a large palm-leaf one, which she moved lightly to and fro—glancing at him the while in a provocative, mischievous way, for which I should like to have shaken her.

"You are quite sure," he said, lowering his voice, "that it is imaginary?"

"As sure as that I take everything lightly, and have never given any subject five minutes' serious consideration in my life," she answered.

"You don't expect me to believe that," he said. "I wonder why you always try to make me believe you are frivolous."

"Oh," she said, with unembarrassed readiness, "pray don't speak as if I had made an effort to impress you with my being—anything. Didn't we agree the other night that everything in the world is illusive, and imaginary, and that the theory of the primordial atomic globule was the only theory any sensible person ought to take of the mystery of existence?"

"The other night," he said, "we talked a great deal of nonsense, and called it philosophy."

"Let us make a change, then," she said, laughing up at him as he leant slightly forward. "To-day we will talk philosophy and call it—nonsense."

"No," he answered; "I am not in the mood for either subject."

"Are you going to be serious?" she asked, waving the fan slowly to and fro, so that it sometimes revealed, sometimes hid her face. "Be warned in time. I am not, and I don't intend that you should be."

"And why?" he said, impetuously. "Is my mood to wait on yours? I am not at all fond of being dictated to, nor at all meek under coercion."

"No more am I. What a wonderful similarity of disposition, is it not? Now, who is going to yield?"

"Place aux dames," he said, laughing. "I give in as usual."

"You need not have done so," she said, "for I am just going to dismiss you. I am due at one of those feminine conclaves to which you alluded so slightly a few moments ago. Will you stay and amuse Jack and Reggie while I change my gown, or shall I say good-bye now?"

"Where are you going?" he asked, rather eagerly. "Perhaps I am bound for the same place."

"I think not," she said. "For I asked my hostess if she knew you, and she said she had not that honour."

"You did not offer to supply the necessary introduction, I suppose?"

"Why should I?" she said, rising from the chair, and standing there in her pretty, indolent grace before him. "Don't you think we have enough mutual acquaintances already?"

"If I said—no?"

There was something in his eyes and voice that seemed to startle her. She turned quickly away.

"Come, boys," she said, "say good-bye to Rex; he is going."

The young fellow's face turned very pale; his eyes flashed stormily; but he said nothing as the children rose up, only tossed Reggie up in his strong arms, and then set him down with a kiss.

Meanwhile, Miss Kate made a sign to me.

"Come to my bedroom, Jane," she said; "we can finish our chat while I am changing my dress."

She turned, and held out her hand.

"Try and bear up," she said, mockingly. "The parting is not for very long; and she laughed, and moved away to the door, while he stood silently watching her with something in his eyes which was not anger or pain, but surely a blending of both.

I followed her, leaving the children clinging to Mr. Tresyllion's arm.

Once in her bedroom, she seemed to change quite suddenly. Perhaps she had forgotten I was there; I don't know. The colour faded from her face; her eyes grew sad and wistful. She went over to the mantelpiece, and leant one hand on it as if to support herself.

"What is it, Miss Kate; you are ill?" I cried, anxiously.

She started, and made a visible effort to command herself.

"The season is trying me, I think," she said, "or I am not as strong as I used to be. Really, Jane, sometimes I am obliged to confess I feel—tired."

She laughed a little, mirthless laugh—more pathetic to me than tears.

"Oh, my dear, my dear," I cried, as I came over to her and put my arm round the trembling figure, for all the world as I used to do when she was a little child. "Go away from here—go to your own safe, quiet home. This is not the place, not the life for you. Why should you wear out your health and youth and strength for the sake of society? What can it give you in exchange?"

"I should have said nothing, a month

ago," she said, wearily. "I dare say you are right, Jane; my life is not healthy or natural, only I seem now as if I can't do without excitement. The days are so long, the hours so wearisome."

"They should not be that, surely," I said. "What do you lack? You have a beautiful home, a good husband, children, friends, position, money. You ought to be as happy as the day is long."

She turned on me with something of the old fire and passion.

"Happy!" she cried, "I happy! What are those things to one cursed with my restless, miserable, discontented nature? Don't talk to me of happiness; you take the world's view of it; you don't even understand the meaning of the word!"

She tore off her beautiful gown and tossed it aside with superb disdain, and, somehow, how or why I don't know, but as I saw her moving to and fro in that restless, impetuous fashion, I thought of the pretty child-figure with the bare arms and neck, and short, white, fluttering skirts, that I had watched dancing like a leaf in the wind, in that hotel bedroom in Paris so many years ago. And as I thought of it the tears rushed to my eyes, and it seemed to me as if I must speak one word of warning if only for the sake of that memory.

"Miss Kate," I said, and then a sob rose in my throat, and she turned and looked at me in wonder. "Oh, Miss Kate," I went on in a broken, foolish fashion, "don't be angry with me, don't be offended. Remember I am only your old nurse, who loves you better than any one else in the world. Oh, my dear, I know what troubles you—and—and it will only get worse. Any one must be blind not to see that. Don't rush into wilful misery; don't add another to the many sad histories of society women. Your fate is marked out, you can't alter it now. You are not happy; but better a little unhappiness at the first than the misery that will surely follow—if—if you yield."

She sank down on the chair by the dressing-table. Her face was very white. Her great, dark eyes looked at me like the eyes of some wounded and suffering creature.

"You have noticed—even you," she said in a stifled, husky voice. "Good Heaven! have I fallen so low already?"

"I have been mad, I think," she went on, brokenly. "I thought I was so safe; that I should never care; that I could defy Fate. Oh, Jane, you are right. My

good angel must have sent you to me. I will leave town at once—to-morrow, if possible. I—oh, it isn't possible that I should care so much, that it will hurt me to do it. I was always such a coward, you know, Jane. I—I never could bear pain well. But if it has to be done, it must be done quickly—at once. Oh, you are right, quite right, I know; and I—what a blind, silly fool I have been! But I shall stop in time. You have shown me the precipice, while I was looking only at the flowery path that led to it. But, oh! Jane, Jane!—"

She threw herself into my arms, my poor, pretty dear, just as if she was the little, wilful, passionate child I used to scold and pet in the old days. It wrung my heart to hear her sobs. It made me bitterly indignant to think of the selfishness, and cruelty, and vanity that had led her on to suffer like this.

"As if one woman at a time wasn't enough," I said to myself in bitter indignation. "What brutes men are!"

And then Miss Kate drew herself away from my arms, and suddenly seemed to grow quite cold and calm.

"Go home now, Jane," she said, "and don't worry about me any more. When I once make up my mind to do a thing, I can trust myself to get through with it. I have been playing with fire, but the scorch and the pain have only hurt me—no one else."

She kissed me, and then put me aside somewhat hurriedly.

"Good-bye, Jane," she said. "Heaven bless you for your faithful love. When to-morrow comes, think of me, and—and pray for me now and then. Perhaps I may need your prayers, Jane, more than you think—need them, though I have taken your advice and gone away from— from this hateful town to—to, what was it you called it, Jane?—my own safe, quiet home—my own safe—quiet—home."

LONDON'S COUNCIL.

WHILE all over the country the new County Councils are coming into existence, and will soon replace the existing Government by Justices of the Peace in the rural districts, and will reinforce the existing municipal organisations with fresh powers and functions, although the change will be felt in various ways, yet the practical difference to people in general will not be very great. But in London the change is

organic, and gives hope of a new order of things, to arise out of the chaos of the present vague and conflicting powers.

Strictly speaking, hitherto there has been no London, beyond the ancient limits of the City. When London had to be spoken of, the real existing London, with its millions of inhabitants, it was necessary to define what was meant. As the sound of Bow Bells grew fainter and fainter in the far-off suburbs, people heard of London within the Bills of Mortality, as though there were no question of any but the dead. Then after a long interval we had London according to the Local Management Acts, and London after the School Board measurement. Criminal London, whereof the hub is the Old Bailey, had wider limits still, and the London of the Metropolitan Police is the most extensive of all, and embraces a good deal of what is pure unsophisticated country. And there was Parliamentary London, of still more irregular boundaries. But now at last we are to have a real definite London, with its representative Council, and boundaries, and jurisdiction, which must sooner or later supersede all the rest. At last we have a municipality which, if it be equal to its destinies, should become the greatest and most powerful that ever existed.

That a new era will begin with the new Government of London, everybody must hope. Experienced people of mature years may have hoped before, and have been disappointed. The Board of Works, which the new Council supersedes, was expected to do great things for the improvement of London; nor did it altogether fail of its purpose. A complete system of main drainage—complete except as to the most important part, perhaps, the ultimate disposal of the sewage—the Thames Embankment, free bridges, new thoroughfares, new parks, and open spaces; all these will form a handsome monument to the memory of the moribund Board. And, to begin with, the new Council will be little more than the old Board "writ large," with one hundred and thirty-eight members, instead of sixty, and elected direct by the rate-payers of the metropolis, instead of indirectly by vestries and public bodies. Still, London will have been made; its Local Parliament must ere long assume the duties that naturally belong to such an assembly, and doubtless it is destined to absorb all other Boards that, at present, deal with metropolitan affairs. The public

health, public education, the care of the poor, the control of the supplies of gas and water; all these must eventually come under the government of the new Council, which is certainly numerous enough, and, in all probability, will be able enough to deal with every function of municipal life.

Such anticipations give rise to sanguine forecasts of the future of our great metropolis. We do not expect the new Council to convert the City from brick to marble. The former suits us better, and even the common yellow brown variety harmonises in its hues with the fog in the air, and the dirt in the streets, and claims our sympathy by its quiet, unobtrusive ugliness. A great part of the general public when it hears, for the first time, perhaps, of the new Council, asks, will it keep the streets clean? Nothing is more amazing to the uninitiated observer, than to see the dirt and slop of London streets lasting all the winter through, and to be told at the same time of the number of unemployed who are almost starving in their compulsory idleness. Perhaps with less mud we should have fewer fogs; and certainly we should have more healthy existences. With mud and slush come catarrh, influenzas, fevers, rheumatic pains, and a considerable number of the illa that flesh is heir to; and against mud and slush let us hope that we may find doughty champions in the new County Councils.

The regulation of street traffic, which is now an affair of police, seems to come within the province of a London Council. Dangerous crossings should be bridged over for foot passengers, blocks and delays in wheeled traffic should be prevented by traffic inspectors, who would exercise a general supervision over the movement in the streets.

Perhaps, under the new rule, there will be somebody to look after the cattle-drovers, and to prevent the cruelties often inflicted on the poor beasts, which are constantly marching up to death to supply our tables; as well as to protect us from the dangers of cattle over-driven, and half-maddened with thirst, in the midst of crowded thoroughfares. All this was supposed to have ceased with the horrors of old Smithfield; but such is not by any means the case.

But in addition to dealing with the traffic, our new Council should have power to construct, or authorise the construction of new means of locomotion, without the necessity of any but a formal reference to

the Imperial Parliament. In some of our large cities, the municipal authorities themselves construct tram-lines where they are required, and lease the running powers over them to private companies. But in any case the London Council will have a preponderating influence over all new schemes of the kind. A system of subways for the conveyance of gas and water-pipes, and of every description of electric and other wires, has long been advocated; and though the immediate expense would be great, the saving in labour and in the maintenance of the roadway would also be great, and the intolerably growing nuisance of overhead wires, which threaten all manner of evils to buildings and passengers, could then be finally suppressed.

The supply of gas and water is a still more important matter; but this is a question which bristles with all kinds of difficulties. The existing water companies are strong and old-established, and firmly grounded on their enormous revenues, and so they work their wills upon us almost unchecked. They hold the power, and exercise it freely, of cutting off a household from all supplies of this vital necessary, in happy disregard of all sanitary considerations. And considering that all public sources of water supply have fallen into disuse, or been condemned, it would seem that to deprive people of water is a "*peine forte et dure*," which, if inflicted at all, should only be by a regular court of justice. On the other hand, the existing sources of our water supply are mostly of a very poor character, as regards purity and freedom from organic matter; and a burning question for the consideration of our new Council will be, whether it shall assume the duty of finding more distant sources of supply, where a pure and limpid fluid, uncontaminated by sewage, might be obtained. It would be an enterprise altogether practicable to bring an aqueduct from the Severn Valley, or the Malvern Hills, or even from the more distant mountains of Wales. Only the want, now happily supplied, of an autonomous Government for this great metropolis, has caused this important question to have been so long neglected.

If the gas monopoly is less objectionable to the general, that is because people can do without it in their houses, now that lighting by mineral oil has made such progress. Still, its effects are grievously felt in all commercial establishments, and unduly swell their general trade expenses.

And the effective lighting of our streets, whether by gas or electricity, is a matter with which our County Council must soon concern itself.

The housing of the labouring poor of London is also a question of pressing importance for the new Council. And also the condition of that vast floating, homeless population, estimated at thirty thousand souls, that resort to common lodging-houses, and supply many of the most dangerous elements of our social state. While even worse than the state of these is that of the crowded population of so-called tenement houses in the lowest quarters of the town, where every kind of social evil festers and increases. And surely something will be done in winters to come, in the way of public refuges, where the most wretched of homeless wanderers may find warmth and a shelter.

When sundry matters come under the control of the Council, we may hope for an energetic carrying out of existing sanitary laws, and a general improvement in the conditions of existence. Hospitals for infectious diseases and asylums for lunatics, must soon come under the control of the Central Council, and greater efficiency, combined with economy, may confidently be expected.

There is certainly a succession of herculean tasks awaiting the new Council, and it is to be hoped that it will prove strong enough to grapple with them. With the paramount claims of health and comfort, clean streets and ready means of communication, much may also be done to make London a city beautiful. Trees along the broad boulevards, fountains and flower-beds; all the brightness and charm that can be impressed upon sombre streets and sad-coloured suburbs. All these things will no doubt be cared for by the new ediles of greater London. Also, it will be their duty to urge the Legislature to justly apportion the costs of all the great improvements of the future between those, the great bulk of its constituents, who have but a short, uncertain tenure of their advantages, and the few whose property is constantly enhanced in value by the public works of which they have hitherto borne but an infinitesimal portion of the cost.

A new London is arising, to the extension of which it is impossible to set any bounds. It has been calculated that if the metropolis increases at its present rate for the next forty years, at the end of that period it will embrace a population of something

like twelve millions of souls. Even now, with its four millions of inhabitants, it is a city the like of which the world has never seen before; a state that for wealth, and revenues, and far-reaching influence, bears the palm over any in ancient or modern times. But if its riches and prosperity are unequalled, so also are its misery and degradation. And hence the enormous responsibility of its new rulers. The good they may do will expand and multiply in never-ending increase; but the evils they leave untouched will grow and develop with still greater luxuriance. Yet a hopeful augury for the future is to be found in the general interest that is taken in the election and constitution of the new Council.

HARMONY.

A COMPLETE STORY.

CHAPTER I.

ANY one who was unfortunate enough to have been walking along the dusty road to Pengollan on a certain day at the end of June, not many years ago, might have felt rather inclined to wonder whether, after all, summer was as entirely delightful as he had been wont to think. But no one in the little orchard behind the white-walled cottage, which some flower-loving rustic had named "Rose-in-the-Fern," could have failed to be grateful for the arrival of a real June day.

Lounging at ease in the long grass, his head supported by the lichen-grown trunk of an ancient apple-tree, Frank Hardy was enjoying life as it can only be enjoyed in the days when the name "long vacation" seems absurdly paradoxical, and when an uneventful day is deemed not "dull," but "peaceful." Around him were a few score fruit-trees, of which the majority were old, and covered with the orange and grey tints of lichen. Rows of leafy sycamores stood along the walls, which shut off this little paradise from the glaring high-road beyond, and which were clad in a profusion of glistening hart's-tongue ferns. It was not yet noon; but the jubilant noise of early morning had grown silent, and the constant murmuring of the bees, as they sped to and fro throughout a little plot of garden ground, made the stillness seem only more intense. Gazing across the curiously-shaped flower-beds, with their wealth of moss-roses, fragrant pinks, harebells, and homely stocks, Frank had long been

watching a window which stood wide open, as if to let in the scent of the roses which covered the walls of the cottage, and clambered over the low, brown-thatched roof.

Frank Hardy had just come down for the "long," and was spending a portion of it with his brothers and sisters at Pengollan, a diminutive village on the north coast of Cornwall, beautiful in the extreme, but dull to desperation. To the younger members of the family the staking of tiny, though ferocious crabs, and the building of wave-defying sand castles, were so delightful, that nothing, save constant rain, could well have made them weary of the place. Frank, however, might have found the time lying rather heavily upon his hands, had it not been for the fact that he was in that blissful state when a man desires only one thing, and is just beginning to own to himself that his hopes of some day securing that prize are not altogether baseless.

Presently he rose and walked towards the window. At a table in the room into which he was looking sat his cousin, Maud Stanley. Her face was buried in her hands, and hidden by tumultuous masses of soft, gold-brown hair; while she was studying with desperate earnestness the pages of a book entitled "The Elements of Harmony." She had turned away from the window, as if to avoid the manifold temptations offered by the orchard-shades beyond; so that Frank stood there unnoticed for some minutes. Presently, however, she sighed wearily, and leaned back in her chair. At that moment Frank tore a branch of scented verbena from a big shrub near at hand, and flung it so that it fell noiselessly amid the papers whereon his cousin had been copying some musical exercises.

"I say, Maud," he cried, "it's a downright shame to waste a day like this! As for harmony—it would be much more in harmony with the weather if you were to come out and sit under the trees with me."

Maud looked up at him piteously.

"Frank, I really must work at this, or I shall fail when the examination comes on. I can't come yet, but you know I would like to."

"Would you really?" responded the young man in a satisfied tone. "I can't think why girls will bother themselves with exams., or why they are so horrified at the prospect of a plough. I wonder if I could help you, though?"

He stepped into the room, and taking up the book, glanced slowly through its earlier pages.

Maud watched him curiously the while; and, when at last he laid down the book with a despairing sigh, said, with a note of triumph in her voice:

"It is difficult, isn't it?"

"Awfully!" replied Frank. "I'm afraid I shan't be able to help you directly; but I could sit here and sympathise until you have done as much as you think necessary."

"Indeed you will not!" cried Maud, her blue eyes flashing saucily. "Go back to your seat in the orchard, and perhaps I will come to you in a little while."

There was a very impatient look on his boyish face, as he returned to his seat under the apple-tree, and proceeded to fill a short, black meerschaum. This done, he leaned back against the tree, and soon was lost in deep meditations on a subject, the weightiness of which was evident from the solemn and deliberate manner in which he puffed at his unlovely pipe. Indeed, the matter then engaging his thoughts was one which, under the circumstances, demanded the fullest possible consideration. It was a question of no less a thing than a tramp of five miles, to Fairford, the nearest town to Pengollan.

The day, as we have already stated, was a hot one, and the road to Fairford lay white with dust beneath the broiling sun, shaded by not so much as a single tree when once it had passed the orchard wherein Frank Hardy now lay at ease. So that he, lying clad in cool flannels, amid the thick grass, shaded by silvery-green foliage, and not so much feeling the sun's warmth as seeing and hearing it in its effect upon the flowers and insects around him, was naturally slow to decide on giving up his present comfort, and undertaking a journey which could not fail to be tiresome in the extreme. But he happened to have strong motives for making the sacrifice, and so at last he rose, and exclaiming, "I'll do it!" leapt over the hedge of the orchard and walked off quickly in the direction of Fairford.

Had he then forgotten Maud's words when she said: "Perhaps I will come to you in a little while"? She, at least, had remembered them; and, half an hour after he had left the orchard, she stepped out into the garden. A wide-brimmed hat shielded her face from the sunlight; but had he not forgotten her promise he

might have deemed himself a happy youth to see her as, with lips half-parted, she stood reaching up to pull down a great cluster of pink roses, and fastened them in her soft, white dress.

One may be pardoned, perhaps, for thinking that Maud believed him to be watching her at this moment. At any rate, no one could have refused to render homage to her beauty as she stood to choose which cluster of roses pleased her best; and she certainly was needlessly deliberate in arranging them when once they were gathered. What was it he had called her yesterday while he asked for one of the roses which she wore?—"My rose, that sweetens all my air." Then suddenly he had ceased, and asked tenderly, almost anxiously: "And there will be no thorns, dear, for me?"

She had answered his question with a careless laugh, but she had not forgotten; and now, as she looked down at the newly-gathered flowers, a quiet smile stole across her face, and her heart made answer even as he would have desired.

But presently she was struck by the silence which reigned unbroken throughout the orchard. She had expected to hear his blithe young voice hail her cheerily, and to see him eagerly preparing her a pleasant seat. Now, when she looked towards the old apple-tree, she saw that he was not occupying the seat which he had made his own. Nevertheless, she walked towards it, inwardly determining to punish him for this neglect with several minutes of dignified frigidity. When she reached the favoured spot, she saw no signs of his having occupied it except an old magazine, whose every page she had already studied.

"Frank," she cried, softly, "I am waiting." Then, after a few moments of eager expectation, she cried again: "Frank! I have done with harmony for to-day."

But there came no answer; and, with a hurt look upon her face, Maud left the orchard and went off to meet her aunt and her cousins, who would soon be returning from the beach to dinner.

CHAPTER II.

PASSING down the single winding street which—together with a few scattered cottages on the hillsides at whose feet the village stands—constitutes the whole of Pengollan; leaving behind you the small cottage-chapel, with its dazzling white

walls and thatched roof, and the old church, with its tower built of alternate blocks of grey granite and of jet-black slag, which was brought, years ago, from the copper-smelting works which then existed at Fairford, you come at last to a place where the road crosses a great expanse of billowy grass land, fragrant with wild thyme, and brightened in spots with golden stone-crop. On the left hand the land, or, to use the local term, the "towans," rise slowly towards the beach; on the right hand are one or two farmsteads, with here and there the lonely cottage of a labourer, from all of which there issue flocks of geese to feed along the muddy bank of a small stream, which presently loses itself in a reed-covered marsh. Soon, however, the road swerves to the right, and runs for mile after mile parallel with the coast line.

Following this road for about a mile, and then leaving it for the space of ground, heather-clad, and honeycombed by generations of rabbits, which separates it from the edge of the cliffs, you suddenly find yourself looking down into a valley which grows gradually shallower as it passes back from the face of the cliffs to the road. Its sides are steep, and covered everywhere with purple heather, and great clumps of yellow gorse, while now and then you may find a spray of pure white heather half-hidden beneath more lusty growths of the commoner kinds. A small stream, rising from a perennial spring half-way up the valley, flows murmuring along its bottom, falling at last to the rocks on the beach, some thirty yards below. Sitting near the mouth of this gorge, there can be seen towards the west the line of low hills which form the western boundary of the bay, and the grey old houses of the fishing-town which stands on their furthest slopes.

Frank and his cousin had already spent many hours here, and looked on this place, which they had called the Happy Valley, as being their own property. Frank, therefore, finding on his return from Fairford, that all his friends had left "Rose-in-the-Fern" in order to spend the afternoon elsewhere, took a hasty meal and set off in the direction of the valley in the cliffs. Here he flung himself down with a sigh of contentment, and the scent of the thyme, whereon he had lain down, surged up around him, as would the waters of a still pool around one who should plunge therein. For a while he was content to watch the sunlight, and to listen to the whisper of the waves as they lapped softly on the beach below.

Presently, however, he took a book from the pocket of his bright-hued "blazer," and, glancing round as if to ascertain whether he was alone, he set himself to con its pages with far more earnestness than he had ever evinced in reading for the schools.

Meanwhile, Maud's indignation at Frank's desertion of her had slowly died away, or rather had yielded momentarily to a burning desire to discover what possible counter-attraction had caused him voluntarily to forego her company. She had gone down to the beach after dinner, but grew tired of the noisy laughter of her cousins, and presently left them to their play, and went off across the "towans" towards the quiet valley, whither Frank had only just preceded her. She had reached the edge of the slope, and was wondering whether it would be possible for her to make the descent without the help of the strong young arm which usually was placed at her service whenever there was — often when there was not — the slightest pretext for its being offered, when she saw a puff of smoke rise from the bottom of the valley, and fly off on the wings of the wind from the sea. Then, glancing at the spot whence it appeared to come, she beheld a pair of brown leather boots. Never dreaming that Frank would have come here, she was just moving away, indignant that an idle tourist should thus intrude on her domain, when the owner of the boots suddenly changed his position, and she caught sight of a "blazer," which she recognised as Frank's. Indignation once more took possession of her. She turned, and walked along the side of the valley, until, standing at its head, she could see Frank clearly. "He grew tired of waiting for me," she said. "He could not wait half an hour." Slowly she walked down the valley, determined to give her cousin a chance of explaining his apparent carelessness. She did not want to quarrel with him; but surely it was right that he should learn that she was not to be thought lightly of because he happened to have known her all his life.

As she approached nearer to him she saw that he was reading. Then she guessed what he had been doing.

"I told him this morning that I wanted a book, and he must have gone over to Fairford and fetched one. Poor fellow! how tired he must be!"

So saying, she walked quietly towards her unconscious lover, smiling as she thought how glad his face would be when

he should turn and see her there. At last she stood within a few yards of him, and still he remained in ignorance of her presence. But she was on the opposite side of the stream, and the ground was damp and muddy, so that she could approach no nearer.

"Have you been waiting for me, Frank?" she cried, gaily.

Her cousin started to a sitting posture, and answered in the guiltiest of tones:

"No—that is—— Why, Maud, where did you spring from?"

Maud was sufficiently astonished at the words, still more at the embarrassed tone in which he had spoken them. She had seen, too, that he blushed hotly when he heard her voice, and that even now he was trying to smuggle out of sight the book in which he had been so deeply interested a few moments before.

Her voice was very cold and dignified as she replied:

"Are you tired of my company, that you couldn't wait for me this morning, and left me to play with the children this afternoon? You might, at least, offer to help me across the stream."

Then, as he stepped forward with outstretched hand to give her the help she had demanded, she exclaimed:

"No, thank you; I prefer being here."

Frank looked bewildered.

"I am sorry, Maud," he said, "but I wanted to get a—some things in Fairford, and quite forgot that you were coming to me."

At this confirmation of her first explanation of his neglect, Maud looked more friendly, and said:

"You went to Fairford to get a book? Oh, Frank, I am glad! I think I've read every scrap of print in the house. What did you get?"

At Maud's first words Frank had once more blushed fiercely; as she concluded, his face was a picture of blank despair.

"No, Maud, I didn't—that is, I was in a hurry, and forgot it. But I will go over at once and get you one."

Once again the friendliness vanished from Maud's face, and it became a perfect study of outraged dignity.

"Never mind, thank you," she replied.

"You have a book, and you are hiding it from me at this moment. Besides, you blushed when you saw me here. And as you don't offer to lend it me, I suppose that your book is unfit to be read by a lady."

She paused for a moment, as if to see

whether he would alter his mind. Her cousin stood on the opposite side of the stream, and his eyes seemed to beseech her to trust him, as he answered:

"I cannot lend you this book; but that is not because the book is not fit for you. Indeed, I think you have read it."

But evidently he was keeping something secret; and Maud, whose faith in him was generally perfect, disregarded his unspoken appeal to her faith, and said:

"I have no right to question you if you do not choose to answer; and, of course, you can read whatever you prefer. Besides, I have never read 'Paradise Lost,' or Montgomery's poems. I remember that both are in the parlour at 'Rose-in-the-Fern,' and I have always been fond of poetry."

So saying, the young lady retraced her footsteps up the valley, a little depressed that she had quarrelled with Frank, yet feeling at the same time a novel and rather pleasing sense of her own importance.

Frank stood and watched her as she went from him; and when at last she passed out of his view, he drew the unfortunate book from his pocket, and flung it angrily over the cliffs. The tide was rising rapidly, and the book fell amid the mingled sand and spray of the foremost waves. Frank watched it a while as it was carried hither and thither by the waves. When at last he lost sight of it, he clambered up the side of the valley and slowly made his way back to "Rose-in-the-Fern."

CHAPTER III.

HE had chosen to go by a footpath which led along the edge of the cliffs, and finally across a tract of desolate sand on to the "towans," and so into Pengollan. Along this path he walked thoughtfully, and not noting how the sky grew every moment darker and darker. At one point of his walk he caught sight of the road, and saw a white-robed figure, which he recognised as being Maud's, hastening into Pengollan. A moment later he glanced in the direction of the low-lying western hills towards which he was now moving. An unbroken mass of angry purple clouds rose high above them, and the sunlight, struggling through some nearer clouds, fell on the glistening plumage of a few sea-gulls which were visible as tiny moving specks of dazzling white against the purple background. Even while he watched their flight, the sunlight faded from the sea;

the waves on the further side of the bay grew suddenly dark and troubled, and he heard, mingled with the cries of innumerable sea-birds which floated through the air above and below, the wailing of a rising wind. Soon the rain had come, and he was drenched to the skin when presently he reached "Rose-in-the-Fern."

The rain fell constantly throughout the whole afternoon, and did not cease when, earlier than usual, darkness fell. Frank, after sitting with the others for the first part of the evening, went out at last to a disused shed in the old stack-yard at the side of the house, and sitting on the shafts of a clumsy country waggon, meditated miserably on the events of the past twelve hours. He had tried by numberless little attentions to effect a reconciliation with Maud, but she had vouchsafed only monosyllabic answers to his questions, and had greeted his attempts to secure her comfort with a chilly "Thank you." Meanwhile, could he but have known it, Maud was only less unhappy than himself. She sat in the little parlour, and vainly endeavoured to interest herself in Montgomery's poems. But through all she heard the wearisome drip-drip of the rain as it fell from the thatch to the gravelled path, and the shivering rustle of the wind-troubled roses outside; so that she found herself before long in just that state of mind in which Macaulay must have been when he wrote his criticism on the bard whose works she was reading. Presently, however, the wind grew silent; and, when the hour for retiring came round, the rain had altogether ceased. A cold "good-night" was the only greeting exchanged by the two lovers.

On the morrow the weather was again perfect, and the whole earth seemed to be fresher and brighter for the shower of the previous evening. Frank was awakened by the cooing of a big white pigeon, which had flown through his window, and was now perched, in an attitude of the absurdest pride, at the foot of his bed. He sprang up with an energy which made the startled fantail forget its dignity, and disappear through the window at which it had entered. Then he walked to the window and looked out at the tiny, old-time garden, whence a glossy blackbird darted with a shriek of indignation into the cool green orchard beyond.

The first thought was of Maud. "A glorious day again!" he exclaimed. "I'll get Maud to come——" Then he remem-

bered yesterday, and the sentence, begun in such glad tones, remained unfinished.

But while he was completing his toilet, he made up his mind to make strenuous efforts to prevent a second day being wasted through his own carelessness and Maud's lack of faith. He would go over to Fairford and get her some books; then, perhaps, she would be willing to forgive him. But when he reached Fairford, the bookstall at the railway station was not yet open. Life goes at an easy pace in West Cornwall, and especially is this true of all who are in any way connected with the railway. It was, therefore, late when he got back to Pengollan, and learned from Miss Dolby, the owner of "Rose-in-the-Fern," that all the others had gone down to the beach.

Just near Pengollan there is a sudden outward curve of the coast line, and for a mile or so there are no cliffs worthy of the name. The "towans" rise slowly from the road, and finally slope down in steep slopes of loose sand to the smooth, broad beach. The road does not follow this curve, but goes straight ahead until it once more nears the rugged cliffs amid which lies the Happy Valley.

Frank then pocketed one or two of the books which he had brought from Fairford, and made his way across the "towans" until he stood just above the beach to which Pengollan is largely indebted for its popularity.

Then he sat down among the clumps of reed-like grass, planted by the farmers whose sheep graze on the "towans," so as to prevent their pasturage from being destroyed by the drifts of sand which would assuredly be carried inland on stormy days if anywhere the loose sand were uncovered.

Maud and her cousins were walking along the water's edge, and it was not long before they had noticed Frank's arrival. The children greeted him with shouts; but Maud made not the slightest sign of recognition; and so he was content to lie back in his seat and watch them, waiting for a moment when Maud should be separated from her companions, to approach and renew his attempts at bringing about a reconciliation. Presently, however, a strange excitement became apparent among the members of the little group on the sand. The children had been gathering, with the indiscriminating acquisitiveness of their kind, a heterogeneous collection of portable property, in the shape of sea-

shells and big slabs of cork. One of them, running on ahead of the others, suddenly returned to Maud's side, bearing what appeared to be another mass of cork.

"Look at this, Cousin Maud!" he cried, "I've found a book."

Maud took his treasure-trove from his outstretched hand, and began to examine it carefully. The child watched her eagerly; but he did not notice the sudden gladness which lit her face, nor the quick glance which she cast toward the lonely watcher on the sand-hill.

"Yes, it is a book, Jack," she said at length. "Will you sell it to me for a penny?"

The child looked up at her with the wildest delight.

"I don't want it. I'll give it you if you want it; but I'll take the penny."

Maud extracted the required coin from a dainty purse, wrote a pencil note on a scrap of paper, and gave both to her young cousin.

"Take that to auntie," she exclaimed. "I think you'd better all go to her. I am going to speak to Frank."

Nothing loth, the children sped off to where Mrs. Hardy sat comfortably ensconced in a snug corner under the shade of a great pile of rocks. She was a little astonished at receiving the note; but she had not been blind to the events of the last few days; had guessed that her niece had quarrelled with Frank, and so was not long in arriving at the real meaning of the note, which read:

"DEAR AUNTIE,—Frank and I are going over to the Happy Valley. MAUD."

Meanwhile, Frank had been puzzled at Maud's dismissal of her small cousins. Still more was he amazed to see her coming slowly towards him with Jack's treasure-trove held behind her back. As she drew near he ran down to meet her, in order to spare her the trouble of toiling up those slopes of loose, dry sand.

"Have you forgiven me, Maud?" he cried, gladly.

In a tone which would have been chilling if it had not been for the smile, half mischievous and wholly tender, which lurked in her blue eyes, Maud replied: "Will you lend me your book to-day, Frank?"

Frank blushed again as he had done yesterday. Maud saw this, but was not angered by it now. Nevertheless, when he stepped forward to give her the books

which he had just brought from Fairford, she retreated from him. "Will you, at least, tell me why you refused to lend it me?" she said, in a voice filled with badly-suppressed mirth.

Then, while Frank was still trying confusedly to discover an answer to her question, she brought forward the book which Jack had found at the tide-mark. She held it out to him, and said laughingly: "Have you lost it, and is this it?"

Frank took it from her, and while she read in his face the answer to her last question, he was looking down on the torn and sodden book which he recognised at once. The original covers had been torn off by the waves, but the title-page remained, and on it he read the words, "The Elements of Harmony;" while it was just possible to trace his own name, written hastily in pencil-marks, now almost obliterated. It was the book which he had yesterday flung over the cliffs—the book, to get which he had tramped through heat and dust to Fairford.

Then Maud spoke: "You dear old fellow, did you think that you could help me, and were you ashamed to be caught preparing it? Frank, I will trust you always now."

Then Frank began incoherently to tell how glad he was that their brief quarrel was ended; how wretched he had been while it lasted. And presently they moved away across the "towans" towards the Happy Valley.

DAY DREAMS.

I.

How they come, and how they go,
Ever fleeting, never slow,
Sailing up to Heaven;
Tiny, subtle, wayward things,
Brilliant meteors, sparkling rings,
Which flash, and then are riven!

II.

How they go, and how they come,
Some so restful, yearning some;
Others like wild flowers!
Some like fragrant even-wind;
Some like clouds upon the mind,
Which, later, turn to showers.

III.

How they come, and how they go,
Born in sorrow, nursed in woe!
O happy, useless dreaming!
Rainbow-tinted, many-starred,
Teardrops shed, sweet fancies marred—
Is all to end in seeming?

THE GOLD-FIELDS OF THE BRITISH ISLES.

IN Mr. Baring-Gould's novel of "John Herring," a reverend gentleman finds absolutely conclusive proof that the

Phœnicians were once settled in the West of England, in the "singular and significant fact that clotted cream is made nowhere in the world except in Devon, Cornwall, and Phœnicia." The argument is continued to show that not only were the Phœnicians settled there, but that they actually discovered and worked gold-mines. And then, in the story, occurs the "discovery" of a mine which is proclaimed to be the identical Ophir of King Solomon.

Now Ophir has been "discovered" in almost every quarter of the globe—from Cornwall to China, and from North India to South Africa; and we need not remind readers of "John Herring" that the Ophir in Cornwall turned out to be a swindle. Yet it is not only pretty certain that the Phœnicians were in Britain in Solomon's time, but it is also probable that they found gold there. It is said that they contracted to supply the Jewish King with tin, and tin was only found to any extent in the Old World in Cornwall. Pliny says that gold is found in tin, and, as a matter of fact, it is sometimes found in tin-washings. There is abundance of evidence in the old Latin historians that the mineral wealth of South Britain was the object of trade with the Phœnicians some centuries before the Romans came.

As for Ireland, Thomas Moore, in his History, says that "During the reign of Tighernmas, gold is said to have been worked for the first time in Ireland, a mine of that metal having been discovered in the woods to the east of the River Liffey." Now Tighernmas lived, if ever he did live, a very long time ago; and another Irish record gives the date Anno Mundi, 2816, as the year in which gold was first wrought by Tighernmas, and was made into ornaments by the men of Cualan, a district on the banks of the Liffey. A few years ago there was discovered in the bog of Cullen, on the borders of Tipperary and Limerick, a number of gold vessels and ornaments, and also crucibles, ladles, etc., for the working of the metal. All these were found under a bed of peat, which, according to geologists, must have been deposited within the last three thousand years. Again, as the Irish word for gold is "or," the occurrence of that affix to many names of places is held to be indicative of the existence of gold at or near the places. Thus Slieve-an-Ore (Co. Clare and elsewhere), means "Mountain of Gold"; Tullymore (Co. Down), "Little Hill of Gold"; Croom-

an-Ore (Co. Cork), "Hollow of the Gold"; Lug-an-Ore (Co. Tipperary), "Hollow of the Gold"; Glen-an-Ore (Co. Cork), "Glen of the Gold"; and so on.

Mr. Kinahan, official surveyor to the Geological Survey of Ireland, says, that it seems proved by the annals that the gold in the mountains of Dublin and Wicklow was worked by the ancient Irish. In the records of Brien Boiroimhe ("Brian Boru"), first King of all Ireland, there are many references to gold in the agreements with the different Kings and Princes whom he made tributary to himself.

But leaving the somewhat cloudy region of Irish legends, we have the authority of Mr. Kinahan for the statement that a proved auriferous quartz vein was discovered on Bray Head, Co. Wicklow, in or about the year 1882; that the rocks of the copper lode at Carrigacat, Dumanus Bay, are auriferous; that the pyrites of Avoca (Co. Wicklow), contains traces of gold; and that a galena found at Connary also contains traces of the precious metal.

Elsewhere Mr. Kinahan is even more explicit. He says: "Gold has been got by streaming, or placer-mining, in diluvium near Slieve-an-Orra (Co. Antrim), in the Mayola River (Co. Londonderry), in the Dodder (Co. Dublin), and in the different tributaries of the Avoca (Co. Wicklow). Of the finds in Antrim and Londonderry little is known. In reference to the first, gold was found in the streams from Slieve-an-Orra into Glendun, prior to 1829; while in other streams from the same hills there are feriferous sands. In a "Natural History of Ireland," written about the time of Charles the Second, "gold of Londonderry" is mentioned. Small pieces of gold have, of late years, been picked up in the gravel at Glennasmole, part of the Valley of the Dodder, while, quite recently (1878), a small nugget was found in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, in a load of gravel brought from the Valley of the Dodder.

It should be mentioned that in referring to the auriferous quartz of Co. Wicklow, Mr. Kinahan says that "There would seem to be some similarity between these rocks and those of Merionethshire, where gold has been worked near Dolgelly and Barmouth." This was written before Mr. Pritchard Morgan's now famous discovery; but the similarity of the rocks seems to have struck others, for there has been of late quite an eager gold-hunt instituted in Ireland.

There is little doubt that the discovery of anything like liberal deposits of gold would entirely change the fortunes of the "distressful country," whose troubles are so much due to lack of diversity of industries for the people.

But let us now take a look at the more substantial testimony of Wales.

The story of Mr. Pritchard Morgan's gold-hunt we may assume to be familiar to every reader. Suffice it to say that, after twenty years' gold-digging in Australia, Mr. Morgan came home with the determination of developing the gold-fields of his own country. He began in the Valley of the Mawddach, some eight miles to the North of Dolgelly in Merionethshire. After much preliminary work and costly quarrying, crushing was commenced in March, 1888; and, within four months, four thousand ounces of gold, of the value of fourteen thousand pounds, were obtained. This brilliant success led to the formation of the "Morgan Gold-Mining Company," and to the boring and prospecting of almost all the hills in Wales. Among recent discoveries may be named reputedly rich veins on Lord Newborough's estate in the Festiniog slate district, on Sir Watkin Wynn's property near Bala, and on the Pant Mawr, Bulchfyfordd, and Trowsfynydd estates.

Gold in Wales, however, is no new thing. The Pritchard Morgan mines are quite near an old working which yielded ore up to quite recent years. Writing in the "Industrial Review," in 1886, Mr. T. A. Readwin stated that "A good deal of virgin gold has in comparatively recent times been raised within five miles of Barmouth in Merionethshire." About the beginning of the present century there were some sixty square miles of mountains in Merionethshire belonging to nobody, which were subsequently appropriated under several Inclosure Acts, with the reservation to the Crown of the mineral rights. Of this tract Mr. Readwin said:

"Nearly the whole of this large area is more or less auriferous. From one locality, about twenty-five years ago, nine thousand three hundred and sixty-three ounces of gold were obtained by the veteran miner, John Parry, from less than forty tons of quartz, and this by means of the 'Brittens' alone." Speaking of the Gwyn-fynyff Mountain, in which the Morgan Mine is situated, Mr. Readwin says: "Practically there may be said to be in this mountain an inexhaustible quantity of

auriferous minerals, some samples of which are literally unsurpassable as to richness in gold and mineralogical beauty."

In a paper read before the British Association in 1844, Mr. Arthur Dean, C.E., said: "A complete system of auriferous veins exists throughout the whole of the Snowdonian, or lower Silurian, formations"—a statement which was practically confirmed some ten years later by Sir A. C. Ramsay, Director-General of the Geological Survey.

So much for the present, but it may be new to Londoners to be told that they owe part of their water supply to Welsh gold. It happened thus: In the reign of James the First, Sir Hugh Myddleton obtained a lease of the mines of Skibery Coed, in Cardiganshire, at a rental of four hundred pounds per annum. They proved so rich in yielding lead, and silver, and gold, that he cleared a profit of two thousand pounds per month. With wonderful magnanimity he devoted his profits to the task of supplying the City of London with water from the New River. For this work he received a knighthood; but he exhausted his means in the enterprise, and died in poverty, although a member of the Goldsmiths' Company.

The mines, leased by Sir Hugh Myddleton, passed over to Thomas Bushell, private secretary to Sir Francis Bacon, along with some other mines. These were so eminently lucrative that, on the outbreak of the Civil War, Bushell — afterwards knighted — was able to supply King Charles with a hundred tons of lead to make into bullets; with ten thousand arms for the soldiers; twenty thousand suits of clothes; a troop of horse to attend on the person of the King; a thousand miners as a life-guard; and ninety thousand pounds per annum for the King's use for five years; besides several thousands of gold marks for the privy purse.

Bushell also undertook to defend Lundy Island at his own expense.

All this was done out of the Welsh mines — not out of lead and silver, as is commonly supposed, but mainly out of gold — for Bushell had mines near Barmouth, which, as we have shown by Mr. Readwin, is auriferous country. Moreover, Bushell had a mint at Aberystwith, where he coined five-pound gold pieces, and where he doubtless also made the gold marks which he gave to the King.

To conclude, as regards Wales, the following counties of the Principality are

reputedly more or less auriferous: Merionethshire, Carnarvonshire, Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire, Flintshire, and Pembrokeshire. With the exception of Merionethshire, however, the recent discoveries have been insignificant.

When the Romans came to England, they were at first disappointed in their expectations of finding gold and silver. Cicero wrote to Atticus that "There is not a fragment of silver in the island, nor any hope of prize-money, except from slaves." But they soon found it both in England and Wales; and Tacitus, in his "Life of Agricola," says: "In Britain are gold and silver, the booty of war."

In fact, they found the Ancient Britons with coined gold money. Some of the coins of Cymboline, Prince of the Trinobantes, are still in existence at the British Museum. They are all of unalloyed gold, which is believed to have been obtained from mines in Essex. Queen Boadicea is also said to have worked mines in Essex; to have "extracted much gold out of minerals and earth," and to have had a gold coinage. Some authorities consider that England had a native gold coinage as early as 200 B.C., and that the Britons learnt the art of smelting in their commerce with the Gauls.

According to the Roman historians, the Romans found other precious things than gold and silver in Britain. They speak of very fine pearls, of amethysts, rubies, diamonds, agates, and jet. They exported, besides these, tin, lead, copper, furs, wicker-baskets, slaves, and dogs (apparently beagles).

From the remains which can still be traced, it seems that the Romans themselves worked gold at the Poltemore Mines, in Devon, and at Newlands, in Cumberland, as well as at Ogofau, in Carmarthenshire, and at Leadhills, in Lanarkshire. The Newlands Mine was afterwards worked for copper; but in the reign of Henry the Third, mention is made of veins of gold and silver as well, in the same place.

A considerable check to gold-mining seems to have been given by the claim of the Norman Kings to all minerals, and, in fact, to everything not specifically granted. Later, this claim of the Crown was abandoned, except as regards gold and silver, which were retained for the purposes of coinage, and to support the dignity of the Crown. The retention of this last claim was, however, quite sufficient to check gold-mining by individuals, so that

down to the reign of Edward the First, there is very little mention of the subject. From Edward the Third to Richard the Second, however, there was some activity, and Edward the Third is said by Holinshed to have paid great attention to the gold-mines, as did also Henry the Sixth, and Edward the Fourth. Many gold-licenses were granted by these Kings, from which it is inferred that gold was being found not only in combination with other metals, but also in a virgin state. Edward the Third appointed a Warden of the gold and silver mines of Devon and Cornwall, leased some gold and silver mines to Bohemian merchants, and gave other grants of licenses of all mines of gold, silver, lead, and tin in Gloucester, and of gold and silver in Devon and Somerset. In this reign a law was passed permitting all persons to dig for gold and silver in their own lands, and to refine and coin it on condition of paying half the gold, and one-third the silver, to the Crown. It does not appear that the Royal receipts were much augmented by this enactment, the conditions of which it was probably easy enough to evade.

Richard the Second made grants of gold and silver licenses in Devon, Cornwall, Gloucester, and Somerset, and in Henry the Fourth's reign, there was a discovery of gold again in Essex. In Henry the Sixth's reign the Duke of Rutland obtained a monopoly of all the gold and silver mines in England for twelve years, and subsequently the Royal Mining Department was established, with a Comptroller of all mines containing gold and silver in combination with other metals. In the reign of William and Mary, however, it was declared that mines of tin, copper, iron, or lead, should not be regarded as Royal Mines, even though they also contained gold and silver. The reason for this enfranchisement was stated in the Act, namely: "That the statute of Henry the Fourth had prevented the home refiners from extracting gold and silver out of English ores, but that the art is exercised in foreign parts to the great loss and detriment of this realm."

Queen Elizabeth was very keen on the gold question. She granted patents to various individuals to search for gold and silver, or for ores containing them, in the counties of York, Lancaster, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Cornwall, Devon, Gloucester, and Worcester, as well as in Wales and Ireland. This was all very

well; but she also claimed and actually took possession of a copper-mine at Keswick, in Cumberland, which belonged to the Earl of Northumberland, on the score that there was much gold and silver in the copper. The case was taken to the Law Courts and was decided in favour of the Queen, on the ground that, "By the law, all mines of gold and silver within the realm, whether in the land of the Queen, or her subjects, belong to the Queen by prerogative, with liberty to dig and carry it away." Queen Elizabeth also tried to get hold of the Lanarkshire gold-mines in Scotland, during the minority of James the Sixth.

To sum up, not only has gold been sought for in almost every county in England, but it seems to have been actually worked, to greater or less extent, in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Gloucester, Bedford, Cumberland, Durham, and Lincolnshire.

The Scotch counties, in which gold is known to exist even now, are Lanarkshire and Sutherlandshire; but there are also records, at different times, of gold-working in Aberdeenshire, in Fife, in Dumfriesshire, in Selkirkshire, and in Kirkcudbrightshire.

The Sutherland gold was discovered as long ago as 1245, and even now is intermittently worked on the Duke's property. Like all gold-mining, it is very much of a lottery. Men will toil on from year's-end to year's-end barely earning a labourer's wage, and others will make a lucky find which comparatively enriches them. There is some prospect of the Sutherlandshire mines being systematically developed, and they are believed to be tolerably rich.

That gold was found in Fife, even earlier, appears from a grant, made in 1153, by David the First, to the Abbey of Dunfermline, of a tithe of all the gold in Fife.

It is assumed that, by 1424, the gold-mines of Scotland were attaining some importance, from the fact that the Scottish Parliament formally made a grant of them to the Crown, as well as all silver mines "in which three half-pennies (silver) could be fined out of a pound of lead."

The Lanarkshire gold was re-discovered in the reign of James the Fourth, and the Treasurer's accounts in the early part of the sixteenth century bear many payments for the working of the mines. In 1524, "Gold of the Myne" was ordered to be coined, and, in the same year, the Albany Medal was struck out of gold found at Crawford Moor. Between 1538 and 1542

it seems, from the accounts, that forty-one and a quarter ounces of Scotch gold were used in making a crown for the King; thirty-five ounces in one for the Queen; seventeen ounces for adding to the King's Great Chain; and nineteen and a half ounces to make a belt for the Queen. There was also a boar's tusk mounted with native gold to make a baby's coral for the Prince; a gold whistle for the King; and many other doubtless useful articles. And all the time a good deal was being coined.

The Lanarkshire Mines are said, by Pennant, to have yielded, at one time, one hundred and thirty thousand ounces, valued at three hundred thousand pounds. The most productive of these mines were at Leadhills, which were developed by Sir Bevis Bulmer under a grant from Queen Elizabeth and James the First. At Leadhills, lead-mining is still carried on by Lord Hopetoun, and we believe that gold is still occasionally found there. In the sand of the River Clyde above Glasgow, some years ago, particles of gold were found which had been washed down from the hills near these mines. Whether there is now enough gold in the Lanarkshire hills to make a crown for the Queen, we are not in a position to state; but there does not seem to be much activity in looking for it.

In truth, there are many more profitable employments than gold-mining, and there are not the same opportunities for "prospectors" in this country that there are in Australia and California. Yet, judging by the records of the past and the facts of the present, it would seem that the British Isles are more extensively veined with gold than is commonly supposed.

A WHIFF FROM THE PIPE.

THE primeval smokers of the world were, it is almost unanimously agreed, the Indians of North America. These "untutored savages" looked upon tobacco as being a "peculiar and special gift, designated by the Great Spirit for their delectation;" and in such estimation did they hold it, that it figured prominently as one of the future delights of their "happy hunting-grounds."

The legend of its origin tells how, once upon a time when game was scarce and famine rampant, two of the red men left their wigwams to engage in the

chase. After traversing the forest for several miles, the fates, so long obdurate, became propitious, and soon a large stag lay stretched at their feet, a token of their prowess as hunters. With appetites sharpened by fasting and exercise, the two Indians speedily had a portion of their prey hissing and spluttering over their wood fire, and dispensing forth a most grateful odour. Attracted perhaps by this sweet savour, a beauteous spirit descended from the clouds and seated himself, an unbidden but welcome guest, at the banquet. The natives, proverbially hospitable, immediately offered to their visitor the tongue of the stag, that being esteemed the greatest delicacy. It was accepted, and, pleased with the attention, the spirit spake, saying: "Thirteen months hence, upon this very spot, shall ye find your reward;" then, having spoken, he departed.

In due time, our two hunters revisited the place. Upon the spot where the beneficent spirit had rested, three plants, till then unknown, were growing in full vigour—the maize, the tobacco, and the bean.

That the practice of smoking is very ancient is abundantly proved by the fact that, when America was discovered, every tribe with which Europeans came in contact was acquainted with the habit. And from that date to the present, they have clung to it as one of their primitive customs, elevated almost into a national usage by the fact that no tribal business of importance is considered completed unless the Calumet has gone its rounds, and invested, in respect to some tribes at least, with a quasi-religious character.

Its first manifestation to inhabitants of the Old World, dates back to November, 1492. Tobacco and a new world were discovered almost simultaneously, and, with regard to both, Columbus lay under a misapprehension. Believing that his dreams of a westward passage to India had been proved true, Columbus stepped upon the island which we now know as Cuba, but which he conceived to be Cipango, or Japan. After he had landed with all the pomp befitting a dignitary of Spain, and after he had taken possession of the island in the name of their sovereign majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella, and, like a good Catholic that he was, signed it with the sign of the cross, he had liberty to observe the curious assemblage of natives who had crowded down to the shore. While these latter

gazed with awe upon the vessels, which they imagined to be mighty sea-birds from across the boundless unknown, and which, indeed, from the wrongs that followed in their train, might well have been winged dragons, Columbus and his men observed that they carried "lighted brands" about with them. Ignorant of its charms, the Spaniards came to the conclusion that the natives were merely perfuming themselves, though, it must be allowed, in a somewhat peculiar manner. We can well understand that the odour of tobacco, genuine Cuba as this was, must have been sweet as the scent from thyme-clothed Hymettus to sailors newly released from the bilge-stinking, cramped quarters of their dilapidated sixteenth-century vessel.

These "brands" were the forerunners of our modern cigars, and were made by rolling together a few leaves of the plant, and enclosing them within a maize husk, a practice which exists in the more remote and less visited parts of America even up to the present time.

There was, however, a second mode of procedure. They used, as a pipe, a kind of Y-shaped reed, which was called "tabacos," a name transferred by the Spaniards to the "petun," or tobacco plant itself.

The plant was introduced into Spain by Hernando de Oviedo; but, although the habit of smoking must have been well known, and many a señor, returned from El Dorado, must have puffed his pipe, or twisted tiny cigarettes to tempt the rich ripe lips of the lovely daughters of that far-famed land, yet Hernando seems to have looked upon its cultivation merely from an ornamental point of view.

Shortly afterwards, however, its supposed medicinal properties began to be noised abroad, and one Francesco Hernandez is said to have "ascertained and extolled them." Parliaments were not so strict about the use of poisons then as they are now; invalids were not so scrupulously nice about the nasty messes they swallowed under the comprehensive name of medicine, and doctors had, perhaps, no coroners' quests to dread. But be that as it may, in spite of the countless virtues the plant was once supposed to possess, only one preparation—the Enema Tabaci—has now a place in the British Pharmacopœia.

In 1559, the French ambassador to Lisbon, Jean Nicot, having obtained some tobacco-seed from the captain of a vessel just home from the New World, presented a part of it to Catherine de Medicis,

which suggested the name *Herbe Medicee* for the plant. For Nicot, however, was reserved the honour of giving to tobacco its botanical name of *Nicotiana*; and here comes in a second coincidence, for both the New World and tobacco were named after others than those most entitled to the honour.

Thus far, tobacco seems to have enjoyed a friendly reception; but, perhaps owing to that unlucky number thirteen coming in the legend of its origin, opposition now arose on every side. In 1560 the plant reached Italy, and took hold upon the affections of the people until

The priests with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in" that plant tobacco.

Its influence was felt to be against that mortification of the body, the benefits of which were so stoutly maintained in words, if not proved by deeds. Penances lost half their terrors with a pipe as comforter, and the priests were at their wit's end, when

The Pope, he "rose with a dignified look,
He called for his candle, his bell, and his book,
In holy anger, and pious grief,
He solemnly cursed that rascally "leaf!"

But, as we know, tobacco, nevertheless, flourished, and its use spread.

Turkey, now its most devoted slave, opposed its entrance by brute force. The priests, who, of course, discovered no authority for its use in the Koran, stigmatised it as an innovation from Shitan; the Sultans, subservient to the priests, constituted it a crime; and in a land where heads were never too safe, the smoker found his a little more in jeopardy than of ordinary. But what availed this? Tobacco was destined to conquer the world in a far completer manner than did Alexander, and on it went triumphant, until the Turks not only acquired the habit of smoking, but invested it with the formalities and solemnities erstwhile in vogue in the ancient courts of Mexico.

Russia was next invaded; but mutilation availed nothing where terrors of death had failed, and depriving Slav smokers of their noses was less a hindrance to indulgence in the pipe, than was that yard of whipcord called the "bowstring."

Arabia, Persia, India, and China, each in its turn fell a victim to the seductive weed, and so speedy was its spread, that a doubt has arisen in some minds as to whether China was not acquainted with its use anterior to the discovery of

America. And if the young lady of to-day wish, lawyer-like, to find a precedent wherewith to cover the cigarette she is reported to dote upon, let her know that the small-footed damsels of the Flowery Land have for generations past numbered amongst the indispensable paraphernalia of dress, a highly-ornamented tobacco-pouch.

"The tide of progress flows westward," is a scholarly dictum; but here we have an innovation, an exception proving the rule, a stranger from the west running its victorious course from the land of the setting to the land of the rising sun. And, since peering into the future is nowadays the fashion, can we not foresee the time when the old order shall be reversed—when the New World shall in its turn pour forth its cornucopia upon the "benighted and effete" dwellers in the old countries?

To England tobacco was first brought by Sir John Hawkins in 1565; but to Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Francis Drake is often ascribed that honour. It may be that Sir Walter deserved the distinction, for was he not the earliest English martyr for its sake? Are we not told in the chronicles of the times how one of that distinguished courtier's servants once came upon him while he was "engaged upon a pipe," and how, terrified by observing smoke issue from his master's mouth, he applied outwardly the contents of the tankard which he carried, thus both drenching and disfiguring the outward man, of which the noble Knight was so careful, and depriving the inner of the pleasure which the beer, applied in a proper and legitimate manner, would have afforded? I have often wondered whether, during those tedious twenty years which he spent within the four walls of a prison, the veteran hero was deprived of his pipe. Probably he was, for they were not very considerate of the feelings of political prisoners in that age.

It is strange that Shakespeare has no reference to the habit, which must have been prevalent in his days; though, if all the tales told of him be true, he was certainly "just the man" to take up any new "vice" which might cross his path. Why, then, is there no mention of it in his voluminous writings? For there is not the slightest doubt but that smoking became extremely popular in England; and although, owing to its price, only the rich could at first afford to indulge

in it, yet so highly was it esteemed that ladies of rank were numbered among its devotees.

But again it was destined to encounter opposition; and Englishmen, true to their national characteristic, endeavoured to put it down by Act of Parliament. Very shortly after its introduction, good Queen Bess issued a proclamation against it, and "the wisest fool in Christendom," in his "Counterblast to Tobacco," has left to posterity a specimen of that wit and wisdom for which his Royal Highness was renowned. "Smoking," he says, "is a custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black, stinking fame thereof resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless."

Ben Jonson, too, in his "Gypsies' Metamorphosis," followed the cue given by his Royal master—a wise policy, inasmuch as "play-acting" in those days depended for success, not upon the "common people," and critics, as now it does, but languished unless it basked in the sunshine of Court favour.

The Court of the Star Chamber, as it has been termed, took cognizance of tobacco, and usurping, as occasionally it did, the rights of the "faithful commoners," imposed a duty upon the weed, the said duty going into his Majesty's coffers.

It seems strange to us, that at a time when colonisation was the rage, the only two novel products of the newly-discovered regions—tobacco and the potato—should have been so rigorously boycotted by those in high places; but so it was.

Again, about the time that the Petition of Rights was agitating the country, a glimpse of that Puritanical spirit, which afterwards developed into such far-fetched vagaries as close-cropped crowns, vinegar faces, biblical Christian-names, and pseudo-Joshua-like ideas anent the destruction of the Lord's enemies, might have been perceived in such regulations, interfering with the liberty of the subject, as that which prohibited teachers from being "puffers."

In spite of all its enemies, the plant flourished; literally and metaphorically it took root in the land, and we are told with regard to the former that it answered remarkably well. This is a somewhat contradictory result to that obtained in the recent experiments in tobacco culture; for, if I mistake not, the general opinion is that English-grown tobacco, although a possi-

bility, is not likely to prove a success; the glorious uncertainty of our climate, together with other causes, materially detracting from the quality and aroma. It may be that the smokers of those days were not so exacting in their demands as are the present generation; at any rate, we find that the prohibition of its culture having proved futile, the Crown, in the person of Charles the First, claimed the tobacco trade as a monopoly. He was not allowed to enjoy the proceeds for any lengthened period, for the breaking out of the Civil War deprived him of that, as of many other privileges, to some at least of which he had a far more defensible title.

Not long afterwards, the lack of money being felt by both parties, now that they were determined to fight out their quarrel to the bitter end, the Government, "de facto," imposed a duty upon Colonial tobacco, considerable quantities of which were imported; and lest there should be a loss to the revenue by native tobacco evading payment, they further imposed a prohibitive duty upon that. This excessive impost, however, failed to effect its purpose; and Cromwell's party, who by this had gained the supremacy, had no resource left but to bring in and pass a Bill prohibiting its culture in England, and appointing commissioners to see that its provisions were carried out.

A few years rolled by, and Charles the Second was restored to the throne of his fathers; but, although a change of feeling had taken place in regard to many things, there was no reaction in favour of tobacco. A still more stringent Act was passed, which authorised the destruction of all the then existing native plantations, and thus finally put a stop to tobacco culture in England.

Irish laws then, as now, were "exceptional;" but the exception in this case was in their favour, for tobacco continued to be grown in that country until early in the reign of William the Fourth—some sixty years back—when, for fiscal reasons, an Act was passed forbidding its culture even there. There is very little doubt but that, supposing tobacco were still cultivated there in large quantities, the collection of the duty which is now levied upon it—and which varies, according to the quality of the leaf, from three hundred and fifty per cent. to one thousand per cent.—would furnish a new grievance for Ireland; and, spite of "Crimes" and other such Acts, be an impossibility.

The plant is cultivated at present in most of the countries of Europe, in Asia, and in North and South America. An experiment, too, as I have above stated, has been lately made, with but qualified success, in our own country.

Smokers will be astonished to learn that there are nearly fifty varieties of the plant known to botanists; but of these only half-a-dozen or so are known to commerce.

The best known variety, and that which furnishes the bulk of the tobacco used, is the—

"*Nicotiana tabacum*," or Virginia tobacco, a handsome plant some seven or eight feet in height, with bright green leaves which are often two feet in length.

"*Nicotiana repanda*," another variety, flourishes in Cuba, and furnishes material for the manufacture of the celebrated Havana cigars.

"*Nicotiana rustica*," Turkish or Syrian, also called green tobacco, is a smaller and more hardy variety. It was this plant which was introduced and cultivated in England.

"*Nicotiana Persica*," or Shiraz tobacco, which is chiefly grown in Persia, furnishes the Orientals with that much-prized, delicate tobacco, which is associated in our minds with hookahs, and sugarless coffee.

Latakia, I may state, unlike other tobaccos, is composed of the buds and flowers in addition to the leaves of the plant. In the manufacture of ordinary tobacco the leaves only are used, and these are plucked when ripe, and dried. Different processes follow, varying according to the kind of tobacco which is being prepared. For example, the dark, rich colour and flavour of Cavendish is acquired from the leaves being sprinkled with an infusion made from the midribs, stalks, and other waste parts, after which they are allowed to ferment and dry a second time. They are next subjected to pressure in a machine, whence they issue in the form of cakes. Many lovers of the weed will be gratified to learn that at last there is a prospect of saving from the wasteful "bowl" of the Queen's pipe, that portion of the forfeited tobacco which consists of Cavendish, and of handing it over to the directors of that mission which does such excellent work amongst the fishers of the North Sea Fleet.

Cigars are manufactured in all parts of the world where tobacco is grown; mostly,

however, for home consumption. The best of all cigars are undoubtedly genuine Havanas of good brand; but Jamaica and Mexico both export considerable quantities of superior "weeds."

With regard to choosing a cigar, let the wrapper be good, with a faint gloss and a "silky" down upon its surface, let it be firmly but not too closely rolled, and, lastly, pay a fair price for it; for as to the cheap cigars which flood the market, the best advice that can be given, is summed up in the words, "touch not, taste not, handle not."

Of late years, cigarettes have become extremely fashionable, it being claimed for them that they offer the least objectionable manner of enjoying the herb. This opens out the vexed question as to the injurious effects which the use of tobacco does or does not entail, and upon which endless controversy has long been maintained. The most favourably received opinion, at least that which is most often acted upon, is that founded upon the result of a discussion which took place about twenty years back, between Sir Ranald Martin, Mr. Solly, and Dr. Ranking. Their conclusions may be briefly stated as follows: (i) tobacco is prejudicial only when used to excess; (ii) it is innocuous as compared with alcohol, and in no case worse than tea.

The matter, however, has not been finally decided; probably it never will be. Some, following in the footsteps of Salvation Yeo, attribute to tobacco virtues far beyond its merits; others enlarge upon its poisonous qualities to such a degree that one wonders, after listening to their diatribes, how it is possible for a smoker to live.

There can be no doubt that tobacco is a poison—a slow one, indeed, "almost as slow as old age," as a nonagenarian smoker lately observed—for it contains, as one of its chemical constituents, an alkaloid called nicotine, which Sir Henry Roscoe states "acts as one of the most violent poisons with which we are acquainted, a small quantity acting on the motor nerves, and producing convulsions and, afterwards, paralysis." One peculiarity, which is not commonly known, is that the more delicate the aroma, the more injurious—that is, impregnated with nicotine—is the tobacco. Why this poison has no effect upon moderate smokers, is explained by the fact that its power is diminished by its being so little concentrated.

Smokers have long claimed for tobacco the property of a disinfectant, and the jurymen who, being summoned to one of our gaols to "sit upon" the corpse of a prisoner who had died of small-pox, refused to perform their office unless provided beforehand with pipes and tobacco, had more in their favour than was commonly supposed. Dr. Tassinari, professor in the University of Pisa, as the result of experiments lately conducted by him, has shown that tobacco-smoke does possess that property, inasmuch as it retards the development of some kinds of bacteria, and, as in the case of cholera and typhus bacilli, absolutely prevents the development of others.

Whatever be its merits or its demerits, one thing is certain, namely, that there is an ever-increasing subjection to the influence of this narcotic, whose soothing powers are requisitioned to counteract the evil effects of the worry, over-pressure, and exhaustion which characterise the age in which we live.

A MAN'S FRIENDS.

A STORY IN SEVEN CHAPTERS.

By B. DEMPSTER.

Author of "Mrs. Silas B. Bunthorpe," "No," etc. etc.

PART II.

CHAPTER V.

BUT this last consciousness of Phemie was lost in the sudden rush of overwhelming emotions let loose by Mrs. Jones's coarse, simple jest. Jenkins walked back through the house, and out again to the river edge, where he stood staring down at the water as it eddied and rippled between the rushes and reeds, and caught, out in the deeper stream, strange red reflections like blood, from the setting sun. He was not thinking. His brain was too stunned by the shock of that wild tumult of feeling.

But, slowly, one distinct thought formed itself out of the chaos. He loved Phemie Day. It was incredible, preposterous, mad; but it was true. He loved the woman to whom he was about to do that horrible wrong. And then another thought was struck out clear. She cared for him. Her flushing face; the glad welcome of her greetings; the tender sympathy of her eyes that afternoon; the lingering touch of her hand—all these told him. And, as this thought sent through his

whole being a thrill of the most exquisite delight, a fierce, passionate revolt against Lethbridge stirred his soul.

Why should he think of Lethbridge's necessity? Why should not he, Jenkins, marry Phemie Day himself? Lethbridge had despised her; called her old and faded; jeered at her for being a workwoman. He had refused to save himself this way. Let him fall, then! The bond that held the two together was no longer that of friendship. Jenkins, looking back, with that hot rebellion and defiance in his heart, could not remember the time when it did exist. The more he searched, the farther back his thoughts carried him, until he was not certain that affection did not die on the night that they compassed the death of that old man. They had stuck together since; but it had been a bond of mutual interests, of old personal influences and associations. A bond cemented on Lethbridge's side by fairness of dealing—for Lethbridge had always been fair and generous to Jenkins, from the school days when he had paid him handsomely for doing work he would not have done himself. Jenkins acknowledged this, though, of late years, the two had outwardly drifted rather apart; for it was not good for Lethbridge, in his position before the eyes of the world, to seem to have dealings with a man generally known to be as unscrupulous as Jenkins. But Lethbridge had never tried to shuffle out of his obligations. And Jenkins, growing cooler, and able to acknowledge this, determined that if he married Phemie, he would deal fairly too. There would be enough in that accumulated fortune to save Lethbridge, and keep himself and Phemie in affluence all their life. Of course, there would be a breach between them, never to be healed. They would, probably, never speak to each other again. But Jenkins was not sorry. In a vague kind of way, as he thought of Phemie's pure, true eyes looking on to his own life, he began to see that it would be better for him if there were no Lethbridge and only Phemie. He fell asleep that night and dreamt of her. Beautiful dreams, almost like a foretaste of Paradise.

She was always with him; her voice sounded in his ears; he held her in his arms. But it was curious that the air seemed heavy with some powerful fragrance, which he recognised and yet could not find a name for. And once, as her lips touched his, that fragrance grew so strong, that it

oppressed and almost suffocated him, like some subtle, deadly perfume, and in his struggle for breath, he awoke. But the dream had been so vivid, that its influence still lingered, and the room seemed still faint with that strange, sweet scent. He knew it now. It was the scent of the poplars by the wicket-gate in the old school grounds.

The next morning he went to Bolton's Rents. He timed his visit about twelve, which was their dinner hour. He could not speak before Maria; but he would persuade Phemie, during that brief respite from toil, to come out and take a walk with him. That morning's work should be her very last of dreary, drudging slavery. This morning, though the sun was still pouring down hotly on the close alley and court, and the stained, defaced houses, he saw none of the disfigurements. He did not even notice the everlasting clamour of the quarrelling, playing, crying children. On the contrary, he saw all sorts of other things: a pot of scarlet bloom at one of the windows; a girl feeding her canary at another; while he half stopped to look at a chubby little urchin who smiled up at him with the face of a Greuze.

But he hurried on again, all his calmness and coolness forsaking him now, as he neared her house. He mounted the stairs, grown so familiar to him; he reached the landing with its wonderful adornments.

Mrs. Jones, as usual, was out at her daily work, and her door was closed. But a sudden mist dimmed his sight, and for a moment he could not see that other one. When the mist cleared, and with it a curious faintness of hearing, he saw that her door was ajar, and through it came sounds of a man speaking.

"Do you think that after the years I have loved you and waited to win you, that I will let you send me away, Phemie? I will not go."

"But you must!" It was Phemie who spoke, in a sweet voice, a little hoarse and strained. "Oh, Lawrence, don't torture me so! For it is torture. Do you think that if I did not love you I would send you away? I will not stand between you and this good fortune. Your uncle is sorry for the past, and sends for you, and you shall go. Do you think he would ever forgive you, if you said to him that you had taken a working woman for your wife?"

"Phemie! As if I would give you up for a hundred fortunes!"

"Ah! But you will, for I will never marry you now. I shall go away somewhere and hide myself, and pray always that you may be happy in the new life that has come to you. Oh, Lawrence!" And now she broke, for a moment, into crying, and the listener knew that she was crying on that man's breast. "It is hard! And I am not so strong as I thought I was! Some one asked me the other day if I would like to be rich! And I thought of you and of our long love! And now if I were rich I would not send you away, for you need not accept your uncle's offer. But I am poor, and a working woman, and I will never marry you! Never! But if Heaven lets us meet in eternity, and you have not forgotten me, you will find my love waiting there."

Neither here, nor in eternity. Jenkins had never thought of eternity and its issues. In his eager getting of gold, he had not had time. Now he was suddenly perfectly conscious of eternity, and the possibility of earthly loves living on into it, and through it. And this woman's love would not be his now, or for ever.

He went downstairs, out into the court and through the narrow alley, into the crowded thoroughfare beyond.

There he lost himself in the great tide of humanity, ebbing and flowing ceaselessly through night and day. Men looked at his ghostly, white face and wondered if he were ill, or were haunted by a crime. But he walked past them with always the same quiet, steady steps, and they let him go unaccosted. It was no business of theirs. Under the burning sun, through the noise and the traffic, unheeding all, he went. Of how far he went, or where he went, he had no consciousness, though he must have turned back from somewhere at last, as he found himself in the evening outside his own office door. It was Saturday, and all his clerks had long gone home, for he was a considerate and even kind employer, and gave them the holidays he did not take himself. He let himself in with his key, and, locking himself in his own private room, remained shut up there for some hours. It was six when he entered it. He came out as a neighbouring clock struck half-past nine. He was no longer of the same ashen pallor; his eyes were quiet and keen once more. But his face had aged as if the hours since twelve had been years.

CHAPTER VI.

HE drove to Lethbridge's chambers, and found him in. He had just returned from a political dinner, and was going out again to meet the Lady Winifred Dacre at a reception she was attending that night. At Jenkins's request, he went with him into the library—the room where, a short few weeks before, they had discussed the matter of destroying the papers. Jenkins stood at the writing-table thinking of it. He had lifted a sharp, dagger-like paper-knife from the table, and was slowly and thoughtfully twisting it in his supple fingers. Something in his face, and the movement of his hands, sent a cold chill to Lethbridge's heart. But it was not physical fear.

"What brings you here to-night, Jenkins?" he asked, with an effort at a natural laugh. "I thought you were generally smoking peacefully among your roses at this hour."

"Roses! What roses!" sharply; and then he remembered that there had been roses, only a woman, with sweet, grey eyes, had carried them all away with her—so many, that she had laughingly protested as he recklessly cut down every fragrant bloom of crimson and yellow in his garden. "Oh yes, the roses," with an odd note in his voice. "But it wasn't about them that I came. I wanted to see you to-night. I feel I have made a mistake. It is too late now to go back. A man at thirty-two can't go back and take up his life on a new tack. Perhaps I wouldn't if I could; perhaps to-morrow I shall not think as I do to-day. But I shall not give myself the chance. Only, while I see the mistake, I'd like to tell you. It seems to have gone back a long way. It began before I knew you. But I can't help thinking that knowing you, ought to have made a difference. You were strong, and brave, and free, and happy, too. I never was. Of course it's a cowardly way of putting it. And I don't mean to blame you for what I am. I was a liar, a coward, a cheat, then. And I am the same now. I dare say I should always have been the same. It is only that now and then I remember odd sorts of moments—one, almost the clearest, and about the last that was of any account, was that night we fired the house—when even I, coward and liar as I was, seemed to feel as if I'd like to be something else; and they make me feel, somehow, as

if I might have been different, if my cheating and lying had been kicked out of me instead. But there, it is no use going on at that; there isn't time."

"What are you driving at, Jenkins?" exclaimed Lethbridge, with a constrained, mirthless laugh. He was wondering if Jenkins had gone mad, but felt instinctively that for himself it was something worse than madness that moved his old school-fellow.

"I have come to say that I will not destroy those papers, nor give them up to you!"

"You villain!"

Lethbridge blazed up into a perfect frenzy of rage, terror, dismay, at Jenkins's treachery.

"You fool! stand back!" and Jenkins flung off the hands that had caught at his throat. The next second he had pulled out a revolver and covered Lethbridge. "I am going to give those papers up to Phemie Day. No—I have not got them on me," as Lethbridge, with a murderous gleam in his eyes, looked as if he meant to dare the revolver, and make a spring, "and I will shoot you dead if you advance a step. You will never be able to touch them. But though you will not have all, you shall have enough to save you. I shall see to that. I came, to-night, to prepare you, and tell you what you must do. I shall take all the blame of detaining the papers. You are to know nothing of their existence. You will come out of this clean, as you have come out of every transaction in which I have had to do," with a pale, bitter smile. "Now, I have said enough to prepare you. You are to stay quiet till the end comes; and then, all you have to do is to know nothing. Whatever happens, you are safe from dishonour, though you will not have the fortune."

"Do you think me such a fool——"

"You will not follow me one step! If you attempt to, or try to detain me one moment longer now, I shoot you dead first, and blow out my brains afterwards. Then will come the exposure, and men will know you for what you are—a felon."

Still covering Lethbridge with the revolver, Jenkins retreated to the door.

Lethbridge, filled with hate and fear, with the clammy beads of moisture standing thick on his brow, had to obey. For once, Jenkins was stronger than he. A moment later he was alone. A strange

Nemesis had come to him. The weaker boy, who had been his tool, whose vices he had contemptuously made use of, when he was a schoolboy himself, had in their manhood, by his help, by his tempting, over and over again, drawn out the weaknesses and vices of his, the stronger, nature. Was not it Jenkins himself, who had suggested the burning of those papers, in such tempting colours that Lethbridge had yielded; until now it was the very desire of his soul to get possession of them? And now, at the last, when all depended on it, Jenkins had turned traitor. And yet he might have known that it would come to this. So long as he, Lethbridge, had been the highest bidder for his services, they were his; now he had gone over to the enemy.

CHAPTER VII.

JENKINS went straight down to his house near Taplow. No one was waiting up for him, for he was always thoughtful of his dependents. He was hungry and faint, for he had tasted no food since the early morning. But, after all, as he thought, it did not matter. He must have been a little light-headed, for as he opened his study door, the room seemed full of the scent of the poplars.

He closed the door gently, and going over to the table, put out the light that was burning on it. Then he drew up the blinds and looked out. There was no moon; but the far-off stars shone down passionless, watchful, on the hushed earth. He stood for a moment vaguely thinking how very quiet it all was. Then he roused himself with a long-drawn breath like a man striving against the sleep that is stealing over him.

"Good-bye, Phemie," he said, turning away from the stars and the quiet trees, and silent, sleeping earth-life.

They found him, in the morning, quite

dead. The doctor said he must have been dead an hour or two. There was no need to enquire into the cause of his death. That faint, unmistakeable odour of prussic acid was the witness.

The first post that morning brought Phemie Day a letter, dated from the night before. It was from Jenkins. No one ever saw that letter but herself. But it moved her terribly. She went straight down to his office, as one of the directions in his letter ordered, and there she heard the news of his death.

The chief clerk had also found a letter awaiting him, when he arrived in the morning, acquainting him with the fact that Miss Day would call, and giving him instructions concerning the papers.

These papers proved her to be the missing heiress of Jonathan Day. Before the year was over, she was a rich woman, and married to the love of her life.

She dealt most generously by Lethbridge. In Jenkins's letter to her, he had stated, without betraying his sins, that Lethbridge was terribly in need of assistance, and that speedily. He left the matter in her hands. He knew what manner of woman she was, and she did not betray his trust. She and Lethbridge, as connections, became, outwardly, fairly good friends. Inwardly, she never could conquer a prejudice she had against him. A prejudice at which her husband laughed, he, too, sharing the popular opinion that Lethbridge was "a fine fellow."

Lethbridge, also, inherited all Jenkins's property. The latter having, some years before, made his will in his favour. He did not wish any of his own relations, who had treated him so harshly in his youth, to have it, and he had no one else but Lethbridge to leave it to. By help of this, and Phemie's splendid gift, Lethbridge tided over the difficulties which had so nearly taken another name.

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